

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS18427

The purpose of this legislation is to give absentee voters the option of applying for status as a permanent absentee voter in all elections for which they are qualified. The current procedure for making application as an absentee voter will not be altered, except for an additional box on the application that can be marked indicating the voter's desire to seek permanent absentee voting status. The county clerk will inform all applicable taxing districts as to the voter's status to ensure they receive the proper ballots. All returned ballots will be processed in the same manner as absentee ballots are today. The voter loses his status as a permanent absentee voter upon his request, death, disqualification, cancellation of voter registration, or when a ballot is returned as undeliverable. In addition, the legislation also codifies access to absentee ballots by military servicemen and women.

Exercising this option is voter driven and initiated. The voter requests an application and then returns it to the county clerk before receiving any ballots. This measure will better serve those voters who must or choose to always vote absentee.

FISCAL NOTE

There will be no fiscal impact to the state's general fund. For those taxing districts experiencing an increase in absentee ballot requests, there will be some increases in postage and printing costs. Future cost savings may be realized as the election process is streamlined.

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